

North Township - LaPaz Fire Protection Territory, Public Meeting
Wednesday, April 23, 2025 at 6:00pm
LaPaz-North Township Fire Station

Present:

Roger Ecker, Town of LaPaz
Cathy Welch, Town of LaPaz
Steven Davenport, North Township
Stephen Barber, appointed by Ms. Haskins, Trustee
Lisa Knepp, appointed by Town of LaPaz

Also present:

Emily Haskins, Trustee
Mathew Haskins, Fire Chief
Please refer to the sign-in sheet for additional attendees.

The meeting consisted of the following:

1. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Davenport at 6:00pm.
2. Approval of 4/7/25 Meeting Minutes. Mr. Ecker moved to accept the minutes, seconded by Mr. Barber, and passed 5-0.
3. Billing Service Update: Ms. Haskins reports that EMS/MC has been notified that our Medicare approval has been received. They are also coordinating with Medicaid. In the past several days, she has been completing online paperwork for a variety of providers. We are still projecting for a May 1 start date. She asks the board to weigh in regarding the collection agency, Lifeline, with a 20% fee attached. Mr. Ecker moves to accept this proposal/agency. This was seconded by Mr. Barber and passed 5-0.
4. Employee Manual
 - a. Consideration for volunteers moving to a full-time position. Discussion ensued. Mr. Barber moves that the committee go on record as supporting some type of consideration/compensation for volunteers who are hired for full-time positions and recommend that the Township Advisory Board also consider this. Mr. Ecker seconds the motion which passes 5-0.
5. Employee Benefits Discussion
 - a. Ms. Haskins reviews options available regarding health care for employees. Discussion ensued. Individual Coverage Health Reimbursement Arrangement (ICHRA) was reviewed specifically, which can be provided by a specific company. This allows the board to identify a specific amount of money which can be allocated for each employee and also allows the employee to choose between different coverage plans. It was clarified that we are not required to provide health insurance. If we do provide coverage, we must pay at least 50% of the cost for the employee. Furthermore, it was viewed as important for us to provide coverage in order to attract applicants. Mr. Barber moves to proceed with the ICHRA, seconded by Mr. Ecker, and passed 5-0.
6. Hiring Physical Qualifications
 - a. Mr. Haskins shares his plan for a physical agility assessment for full-time hires. Mr. Barber moves to recommend adoption of this to the Township Advisory Board, seconded by Mr. Davenport and passed 5-0.
 - b. Mr. Haskins reports that some area departments utilize a CDL physical to assure medical clearance to function in the fire/EMS capacity. He also raises the question of a potential need to

obtain medical clearance prior to administering the physical agility assessment. This led to a discussion of the sequence of physical/medical tasks in the hiring process.

- i. Application is submitted with a medical waiver for physical agility
- ii. Fire Department interview
- iii. Physical Agility assessment
- iv. Background/Criminal Investigation
- v. Board Interview
- vi. Conditional Offer, based on passing the CDL physical.

- c. Mr. Barber moved to recommend these steps to the Township Advisory Board to address physical medical readiness in the hiring process. Mr. Ecker seconds the motion which passes 5-0.

7. Trustee Update

- a. Ms. Haskins reports that she has received the invoice for accident insurance for 2025-2026 in the amount of \$6,333.00 with a \$5,000.00 cap. This is the same as last year. It was moved and seconded to approve this. Passed 5-0. (1:02:40)
- b. Ms. Haskins provides a printout of the expenses for the Territory to date. It was noted that April 23 is 30.41% through the year. Expenses to date are about 9% of the annual budget for this year – which does not include accrued expenses or revenue.

8. Good of the order announcements of updates as necessary

- a. Mr. Haskins obtains clarification that the Committee previously authorized him to advertise for 4 full-time positions.
- b. Ms. Haskins indicated that she did reach out to TV stations 16, 22, and 57 about announcing our meetings. She reports that 22 does have a Community Happenings Calendar and was able to post our meeting date and plans to continue this in the future.

9. Next Meeting

- a. Monday, June 16, 2025 at 6:00pm at the LaPaz fire station.

10. Public comment

- a. Patron asks for clarification about the percentage of increase in taxes for the township specifically and complete property taxes in general. Ms. Haskins explained that the specific township rate typically went up about 300%. A typical increase for complete property taxes was about 33%. She adds that variations in these rates have to do with the changes in valuation for a variety of reasons. She also reviews the reasons why the territory was pursued.
- b. Mr. Davenport explains how valuation is determined for farmland.
- c. A discussion ensued about taxes in general including new actions by the state.
- d. Patron asks about the status of our volunteers. Mr. Haskins says that we have 26, 27 volunteers and 3 cadets who are under the age of 18. He emphasizes that the lean times are during the day, Monday through Friday.
- e. Mr. Barber announces that he will be hosting a conversation with the public on Thursday, May 29 at 6:00pm at the fire station. The public is invited to attend.

11. Adjournment: Mr. Ecker moves to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Barber, and passed 5-0.

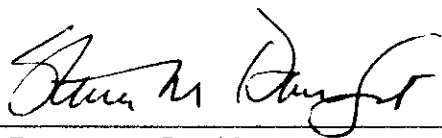
Respectfully Submitted,
Stephen Barber, Secretary

Approved:

☒ As written

☐ As Amended

☐ As Corrected



Steven Davenport, President

6-16-25

Date



Roger Ecker, Vice President

6-16-25

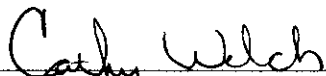
Date



Stephen Barber, Secretary

6-16-25

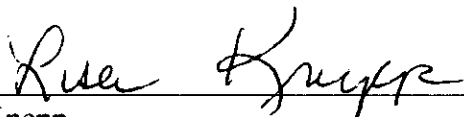
Date



Cathy Welch

6/16/25

Date



Lisa Knepp

6-16-25

Date

Sign-In Sheet

1. Sandy Robertson
2. Al Robertson
3. Quaden Rutz
4. Roger Ecker
5. Gabe
6. Steve Daugherty
7. John Holick
8. Ryan Young
9. Michael
10. Don Buyer
11. Carol Sumpter
12. Carol Hoo
13. Rick Holderman
14. Alice Ayler
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.
- 20.
- 21.

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- 2. Billing service update**
- 3. Employee Manual**
- 4. Employee Benefits Discussion**
- 5. Hiring Physical Qualifications**
- 6. Trustee update**
- 7. Good of the order announcements or updates as necessary**
- 8. Public comment (Limited to 2 minutes)**